

Czech Republic**Capital:** Prague**Language:** Czech**Religion:** Roman Catholic, Protestant**Population:** 10.24million (July 2005 est.)**Population Below National Poverty Level:** Not Available**GDP (purchasing power parity):** \$172.2 billion (2004 est.)**GDP Per Capita (purchasing power parity):** \$16,800 (2004 est.)**President:** Vaclav Klaus**Prime Minister:** Jiri Paroubek**Ambassador to the U.S.:** Martin Palous**National Interest:**

Relations between the U.S. and the Czech Republic are excellent and reflect the common approach both have to the many challenges facing the world at present. The U.S. looks to the Czech Republic as a partner in issues ranging from Afghanistan to the Balkans, and seeks opportunities to strengthen this relationship. The Czech Republic became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on March 12, 1999, and of the European Union on May 1, 2004. It also is a member of the United Nations and World Trade Organization., and maintains diplomatic relations with more than 85 countries.

OVERVIEW OF USAID'S FOCUS IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The USAID Mission in the Czech Republic closed in 1997 after seven years of assistance transformed the country from a state-controlled economy and authoritarian regime to a market-oriented democracy.

Ongoing Regional Activities:

Two regional USAID activities managed by the USAID Regional Services Center (RSC) in Budapest include modest assistance to the Czech Republic. Highlights of these activities follow:

The regional democracy program **NGO Legal Reform** works in the country. Additional information on this activity may be found at http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/countries/rsc/rsc_overview.pdf.

Along with its neighbors Hungary and Slovakia, the Czech Republic participates in the **Roma Integration Program (RIP)**. Through this activity, Roma communities in the Czech Republic are provided grants to expand their education, training, job placement, and to promote their integration into mainstream society. A more detailed description of the RIP may be found at http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/press/roma_initiative.html.

Ongoing Legacy Activities:

Two legacy activities are currently operating in the Czech Republic which include:

The **CEELI Institute** brings judges, lawyers and legal reformers to Prague from all of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union for intensive practical and skills-based training to help them meet the challenges of democratization. More information on the Institute may be found at http://www.abanet.org/ceeli/special_projects/ceeli_inst/home.html.

The **Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education of Charles University (CERGE)** was founded in 1991 as an American-style Ph.D. program in Economics taught entirely in English. In 1992, the Economics Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (EI) was created as an economics research institution, seeking to carry out topical research of the highest international standards. Further information on the Center may be found at <http://www.cerge-ei.cz/about>.

Emerging Donor:

Promoting democracy, human rights and market economies, the Czech Republic Office of Transition will take advantage of "lessons learned" during its transformation experience. More on the Office of Transition may be found at <http://www.mzv.cz/www/mzv/default.asp?id=28811&ido=13987&idj=2&amb=1>.

Point of Contact: USAID/Washington: Mark Phillips (202-712-0044)

www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/countries/cz